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The major point being made, then, is that we as educators can be far more effective if we can change our attitude toward emotional variables by removing these variables from the realm of ambiguity. The affective components of behavior in education must be seen as essential, rather than supplementary, to the learning process. Devices are being developed which will more effectively and efficiently handle many of the cognitive tasks with which the teacher now concerns herself, but it is most unlikely that a device will ever be developed which can deal as effectively with human emotions as can a human teacher. We ask educators to join us in the study of this important area. (AUTHOR)

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Rocky Mountain Educational Laboratory, Inc.

An Affective Behaviors Project Report *

OCCASIONAL PAPER

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS PROJECT

of the

ROCKY MOUNTAIN EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

An Occasional Paper

Presented by

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July, 1967

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PREFACE

This paper is written for teachers and other professional educators who are interested in improving their teaching effectiveness. We of the Rocky Mountain Educational Laboratory are devoting our efforts to improve the learning environment of children. It is our hope that the reader will give thoughtful consideration to the issues presented in this paper and then write to the authors about reflections which may assist us in using our time and efforts most profitably. We would like to have school administrators offer this paper to teachers in their district or building. Classroom teacher reaction to these issues is especially important to our work.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS PROJECT

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Introduction

In September, 1965, several informal meetings were held by faculty members of the University of Colorado School of Education. The purpose of the meetings was to consider research interests among members, particularly those interests which were held in common. We found common interests and concern with affective variables of many kinds. When we began to define our interests we became concerned if this was strictly a local interest or whether the larger body of educators would support study in this area. It was the conviction of members that we should devote our research efforts primarily to priority concerns of the educational community. Because this attitude coincided so directly with the then emerging program of the Rocky Mountain Educational Laboratory, a cooperative effort was initiated. The Affective Behavior Project of the RMEL allowed research to begin at once.

Definition of the Topic

When we asked educators if they considered affect worthy of study, the reply was, "What is affect?" We explained that affective variables are, basically, "emotion" or "feeling-tone" variables. We found in too many circles that emotions were understood as bad, as

something to be suppressed. For many, when emotions were considered, they were dealt with in terms of "emotional problems" only. To others, the cue "emotions" brought to mind the high arousal patterns such as love, hate, joy, fear, anger, surprise, etc.

The latter consideration of emotions is most common, both among laymen and professional writers in the field. But, the use of such terms as love, anger, etc., in writings has seldom been followed by a statement of the behaviors which describe such states. Because of this lack in the literature, most of us can think only of such behaviors as increased perspiration, increased heartbeat, increased blood pressure and dilation of the eyes as emotional behaviors. It appears that these reactions are often the only ones listed in psychology books to which teachers are exposed.

These high arousal states were included in our concept of affective states, but our interests were broader. First, it was recognized that all behavior involves affective components. (The organism must be aroused in order to act.) By affective behaviors, we were referring to those potentially modifiable behaviors to which we must devote much, if not primary, consideration.

In this category we included such emotional or feeling-tone variables as the following: values, attitudes, beliefs, interests, appreciations, morals, ethics, prejudices, as well as the high arousal conditions of fear, anger, love, etc. Of course, all the categories of emotional disturbance from the simpler states through the affective states of psychoses are included also.

We hope that the presentation beyond this point will lead the reader to a better understanding of the concept of affect as held by the writers.

Relevance of Affect to Educators

So what? Of what relevance is a knowledge of affective variables to the teacher? Isn't the teacher's primary role that of directing the learning of knowledges and skills? When one looks at specific objectives listed in curriculum guides and in teachers' lesson plans, this appears to be true.

Nonetheless, when we take note of the general objectives set up by teachers, we note a particularly high frequency of affective rather than cognitive objectives. For example, teachers say they want the students to value the democratic approach to social problems, have a positive attitude toward school and schooling, develop an interest in arithmetic, or gain an appreciation of music and art.

To meet both cognitive and affective objectives, educators are well aware of the advice of learning specialists concerning the use of affect in creating an effective and efficient learning situation.

One of the first things to come to mind is the suggestion to insure the learner success experiences or insure that he has positive experiences in relation to the desired behaviors. More technically, we are referring to the construct of reinforcement as discussed by B. F. Skinner, E. L. Thorndike, O. H. Mowrer, and so many others.

Another point which is readily recognized as essential to learning

is attention, or variations on the theme represented by the terms concentration, alertness, and motivation. Teachers have not been considering attention as an emotional variable, but perhaps they could have far more success in dealing with attention and concentration if they would consider them from this point of view.

Have you thought about classroom management problems in terms of the emotional components involved? Teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interactions obviously have high affective loadings and when the emotional components of such interactions are not properly dealt with we find ourselves dealing with a high arousal pattern called punishment.

Of course, teachers are not the only educators critically concerned with affective variables. Counselors dealing with students having educational, vocational and so-called mental health problems must deal with these variables daily.

Scope of the Study

We have not tried to investigate in detail all of the areas of affect mentioned above. This would have been a herculean task. Perhaps our most significant contribution to education can be made through making teachers and researchers sufficiently aware of the need to apply what information is now known and of the need for more specific information than is now known.

After reviewing the many areas in need of study, we decided to concentrate our basic research efforts on the study of attitude change in education. Our applied research has involved considerations of how to

train teachers to use themselves more effectively in creating differential affect in the classroom.

Attitude Change

As to the former, attitude change, we know that there are few basic research findings which have been tested for direct use by teachers. This puts the teacher in the position of either eliminating attitudinal objectives from serious consideration, inasmuch as he or she has too little direction for the meeting of those objectives; or the teacher can demand help. A sufficient number of requests for help have been received to indicate it would be well worth our time to concentrate on this task.

A look at the basic literature gives a picture of complexity, as might be expected. There is the indication that the teacher should take into account numerous variables and their interaction in order to change attitudes effectively. Some of the variables which have been mentioned by researchers are as follows:

Communicator variables

Credibility: trustworthiness, expertness, attractiveness,...

Similarity to receiver in terms of racial characteristics, beliefs, age, sex,...

Provision of approval-disapproval, rewards-punishments,...

Attempts to create consonance-dissonance

Intent to persuade

Intent to have learning of content and/or acceptance of content

Message variables

Order effects: position of major argument, position of climax, order of positive and negative elements ...

Type of appeal: emotional (positive or negative), rational-logical

Presentation of one- or two-sides of arguments

Presentation of conclusion

Ambiguity or clarity of message

Dosage: amount and intensity

Novelty of content

Amount of change sought

Receiver variables

Persuasibility or immunity thereto

Need for cognitive clarity-cognitive consistency

Initial favor or disfavor toward the attitude object or the source

Knowledge of the attitude object

Perception of pressure to comply

Active or passive participation level in attitude change setting

Retention ... persistence of change

Resistance to counterpropaganda

Group effects: Individual's expectations of approval, plus actual provision of approval by membership or reference

group

Other personal characteristics such as educators, age, intelligence, sex, motives, ego-defenses, self-esteem, security,...

It would be inappropriate for this writer to review here the thousands of research articles which relate to the above categories. Rather, the reader should refer to the several sources already available. In particular are suggested A. R. Cohen's (1964) survey to 1962, and Secord and Backman's (1964) current coverage of the topic. Reviews of current research trends in this area can be found in the Annual Review of Psychology series.

After reviewing the literature in the suggested references, the reader will come to the conclusion that educators must accept the task of studying the educational significance of the above-listed variables and their interrelationships. We cannot wait for others to do the job for us. Cohen (1964, pp. 137-138) has provided us with hints for the direction of our efforts.

> Most of the investigators whose work we have examined make the broad psychological assumption that since attitudes are evaluative predispositions, they have consequences for the way people act toward others, for the programs they actually undertake, and for the manner in which they carry them out. Thus attitudes are always seen as precursors of behavior, as determinants of how a person will actually behave in his daily affairs. In spite of the wide acceptance of the assumption, however, very little work on attitude change has dealt with the behavior that may follow a change in attitude. Research workers have usually been content to demonstrate that there are factors which affect attitude change and that these factors are open to orderly exploration, without actually carrying through to the point where they

> examine the links between changed attitudes and changes in learning, performance, perception, and interaction. Until experimental research demonstrates that attitude change has consequences for subsequent behavior, we cannot be certain that our procedures for inducing change do anything more than cause cognitive realignments; perhaps we cannot even be certain that the concept of attitude has critical significance for psychology.

We are now involved in the study of behavioral components of affect but we recognize that our current efforts are not of much use to the teacher who is now faced with problems of attitude change and is unable or unwilling to study the available research intensively. To such persons we suggest a review of any of the several preliminary attempts to provide the teacher with a set of steps to take in changing attitudes. For example, there is the list given by Klausmeier and Goodwin (1966, p. 357):

> Identify the attitudes to be taught
>
> Provide exemplary models
>
> Provide pleasant emotional experiences with attitude objects
>
> Extend informative experiences about the attitude object
>
> Use group techniques to facilitate commitment
>
> Arrange for appropriate practice of the behavioral components or action components of the attitude
>
> Encourage independent attitude cultivation

With exception of the last point perhaps, the above-mentioned steps could be dealt with by most teachers with little or no further explanation. Admittedly, following such an oversimplified procedure

for attitude change will not bring complete and immediate success but, as Travers (1967, p. 407) states in this regard, "Little is known at this time concerning the extent to which children of different ages manifest ego-defense mechanisms which interfere with the education of attitudes. Until further knowledge is available, attitude education must remain relatively inefficient." Nevertheless, it appears that the effort should be made to use what information is available.

Changing Teachers' Affective Behaviors

As mentioned previously, we are also working on the problem of training teachers to use themselves more effectively in creating differential affect in the classroom.

We are well aware that the emotional climate of a classroom at any one time has important effects on the learning which takes place. For some particular purpose the teacher may want the class to be calm, serious and closely attentive, while at some other time the teacher may wish to have the students operating at a relatively high level of arousal so as to facilitate pupil-pupil interaction. Some teachers are able to arrange such emotional climates with ease but more of us wish we were more skilled in techniques of controlling the mood of our audiences.

The way students react to us is due in part to the way in which they perceive us. It is an interesting exercise to consider the number of emotionally toned words students might use to describe the teacher, themselves, or the lesson. In considering these descriptive terms,

think about how well you are able to create such perceptions. Test yourself on the following list.

accepting	enthusiastic	methodical	serious
active	exciting	open-minded	sincere
approachable	favorable	optimistic	sociable
arousing	flexible	outgoing	sophisticated
businesslike	formal	patient	spirited
calm	friendly	permissive	spontaneous
casual	funny	pleasant	stimulating
certain-sure	happy	provocative	stirring
challenging	helpful	quiet	successful
cheerful	imaginative	relaxed	supportive
competent	inspiring	reserved	sympathetic
concerned	interesting	responsive	systematic
confident	kind	rewarding	tactful
eager	likable	rigorous	thorough
encouraging	lively	secure	understanding
entertaining	masterful	sensitive	warm

Using junior-high-school students and student teachers in a micro-teaching setting,[1] we studied the extent to which students would perceive teachers in such a variety of ways. Included in the list were not only such positive and neutral terms as presented above, but, also, such relatively negative descriptive terms as boring, confusing, nervous, sarcastic, and many antonyms of the above-listed terms. The subjects were to draw a line through the terms which best described their teacher.

We did find that pupils do perceive their teachers quite differently even though no instructions are given to the teachers to behave differentially in terms of setting emotional climate. The

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1. A brief videotaped teaching lesson. Allen, Dwight & Bush, Robert. "Microteaching - Controlled Practice in the Training of Teachers." Unpublished address. Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

point now is whether the teachers created these perceptions intentionally, and whether they could have created different perceptions had they behaved differently.

In observations of those teachers who taught more than once in our setting, we noted different patterns in the two sessions, thereby indicating that they could change. Nonetheless, there appeared to be no intention to change affect-modifying behaviors so as to match the mood with the lesson to be taught.

Through our work, we hope to find ways to help teachers make specific modifications in their behavior which will lead to specific changes in classroom climate. Perhaps this sounds like training teachers to be effective actors and actresses. Actually, this is not far from our thinking. Persons on the stage have been manipulating our emotions at will for many decades but teachers, facing audiences daily, have generally failed to recognize their potential in this regard.

Measurement of Affective Change

For many years teachers have been provided with achievement and intelligence tests which have had sufficient reliability and validity to offer objective support to their subjective estimates. Such has not been the case with the measurement of affective variables.

The most common types of scales for the measurement of affective variables are those for the measurement of attitudes.

The Mental Measurements Yearbook (Buros, 1965) contains an extensive listing of available tests covering the various areas of affect. For an extensive listing of attitude scales the reader is referred to Shaw and Wright's (1967) book, Scales for the Measurement of Attitudes.

In reviewing the available attitude scales, the reader will note that they reflect the authors' emphasis on a rather strict definition of the term, attitude: a relatively enduring predisposition to respond in a particular way toward an object or set of objects. With this sort of definition the test constructor is faced with the problem of measuring a "predisposition" to behave, and, obviously, this is quite a problem. The many attempts to measure such predispositions have been helpful in some research but perhaps they have actually worked against the best interests of the teacher. The relative lack of validity of these scales for the teacher's purposes has often led to a rejection of the value of the concept of attitudes.

Perhaps a broader look at the concept would lead to a wider acceptance of this variable. We do not need to drop from our research considerations the value of the concept as an intervening variable. Nonetheless, for practical purposes we should recognize that there is often considerable discrepancy between verbal statements of attitudes as recorded on paper-and-pencil tests and the manifested behavior from which we infer attitudes.

The teacher will have far more success in dealing with

attitudes if he or she will seek to note what specific behaviors indicate a particular attitude toward teachers, school, persons of other races, political systems, etc.

In fact, the teacher will have success in dealing with most of the area of affect if the concentration is given to the expression of affect rather than primary concern with abstractions.

What does this mean for evaluation and measurement? It means, for example, if you have an objective to increase interest in independent reading, you set up a circumstance wherein such interest can be expressed. One might set up a time each day for independent work. The students would be told that during this time they might participate in a number of activities, one of which would be independent reading. A record would be kept on the activities selected during these periods. Then, for those students showing low probability of participating in independent reading, steps would be taken to apply such techniques as those suggested by Klausmeier to alter the probability of such behavior occurring. Looking at a sociogram, the teacher might note that a student who chooses not to read may have a friend or friends who tend to choose reading when given the opportunity. By arranging for the low-probability-reading student to have his independent activities period coincide with that of his high-probability-reading friends, one could use the "exemplary

models" and "group techniques" principles to increase probability of reading. No interest test would be necessary to measure change. Rather, the record of selected activities kept by the teacher would provide a direct reading of the change of interest.

We can apply this same approach to normal emotions as expressed in the classroom. Why not bring such a word as "enthusiasm" out of its abstract setting and think of it in terms of behavior? There is no reason to be vague in dealing with this type of behavior. Ask yourself, "What do I do when I wish to present a model of enthusiasm for my students to imitate?" Though slight variations are found between individuals and expressions of enthusiasm in different settings, the common pattern of behavior includes an increase in voice volume above normal, increased variability in vocal expression, increased use of gestures while speaking, faster speaking, "widening" of the eyes, etc. When we wish to appear serious, we speak more slowly, more quietly, decrease general movement, and so on.

When we wish to check the extent to which the students are enthusiastic or serious, we need not say we "feel" the students are one or the other. Rather, we can take careful note of the presence of specific behaviors which give us such an indication. With this method, we have little question concerning the attainment of our objectives.

Conclusion

The major point being made, then is that we as educators can be far more effective if we can change our attitude toward emotional variables by removing these variables from the realm of ambiguity. The affective components of behavior in education must be seen as essential, rather than supplementary, to the learning process. Devices are being developed which will more effectively and efficiently handle many of the cognitive tasks with which the teacher now concerns herself, but it is most unlikely that a device will ever be developed which can deal as effectively with human emotions as can a human teacher. We ask educators to join us in the study of this important area.

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